

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
AMCONSUL BUKAVU POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 5968

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, MOPS, CG, ZA
SUBJECT: KAUNDA/MOBUTU SUMMIT

REF: A) LUSAKA 2016; B) LUBUMBASHI 0658 C) LUSAKA 2035

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENTS MOBUTU OF ZAIRE AND KAUNDA OF ZAMBIA
HELD "SUMMIT" TALKS IN LUBUMBASHI, CAPITAL OF SHABA
PROVINCE, ON JUNE 6. DESPITE KAUNDA'S CHARACTERIZATION OF THE
TALKS AS "FRUITFUL" THE ZAIRIAN PRESS HAS LABELLED THEM AS HAVING
BEEN /DIFFICULT." JUDGING FROM THE NEGATIVE AND ACCUSATORY TONE
OF ZAIRIAN MEDIA COVERAGE, EMBASSY CONCLUDES THAT THE ZAIRIAN
STATEMENT
IS CLOSER TO THE TRUTH. NEVERTHELESS, ZAMBIAN/ZAIRIAN RELATIONS
ARE UNLIKELY TO DETERIORATE FURTHER. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PRESIDENTS OF ZAIRE AND ZAMBIA MET FOR SEVERAL HOURS
OF DISCUSSIONS AT LUBUMBASHI, ZAIRE, ON JUNE 6. ALTHOUGH KAUNDA
WAS GIVEN APPROPRIATE MILITARY HONORS UPON ARRIVAL BY AIR
FROM LUSAKA, OTHER TRAPPINGS OF GREETING WERE MINIMAL. ACCORDING
TO THE ZAIRIAN PRESS AGENCY, AZAP, KAUNDA WAS NOT MET BY THE
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CUSTOMARY CROWDS, FIRST OF ALL FOR FEAR OF ANTI-ZAMBIAN DEMONSTRATIONS

AND SECONDLY BECAUSE SUCH CROWDS ARE INVITED TO GREET "GUESTS
KNOWN AS FRIENDS OF ZAIRE." AZAP DESCRIBED THE CITY'S STREETS
AS "EMPTY" AND KAUNDA'S RECEPTION AS "CORRECT."

3. MOBUTU'S COLD SHOULDER TO KAUNDA APPEARS TO BE IN RESPONSE

TO TWO FACTORS. THE FIRST AND MOST OBVIOUS IS ZAMBIA'S ROLE (WILLING OR NOT) IN THE RECENT SHABA EVENTS. DESPITE ZAMBIAN DENIALS, THE GOZ REGARDS ZAMBIA AS AT LEAST PARTIALLY CULPABLE FOR THE INVASION. ALTHOUGH KAUNDA CLAIMED THAT THE ALLEGED DISARMING OF THE RETREATING REBEL FORCES BY ZAMBIA PROVED HIS FRIENDSHIP TO ZAIRE, AZAP DISMISSED THIS RATIONALE. IT REPORTED THAT THE TALKS INCLUDED "DIFFICULT EXPLANATIONS...ABOVE ALL WHEN IT IS KNOWN THAT THE REBELS CHASED FROM

KOLWEZI RETURNED TO ANGOLA PASSING ONE MORE TIME THROUGH ZAMBIA." SECOND, KAUNDA'S TRIP CAME ONLY 48 HOURS AFTER A SIMILAR VISIT TO LAUNDA AND PRESIDENT NETO. FOR NOW AT LEAST MOBUTU IS IN NO MOOD FOR RECONCILIATION WITH NETO AND KAUNDA AS THE "HONEST BROKER." INDEED

THE AZAP EDITORIAL SPECIFICALLY REJECTED SUCH A ROLE FOR THE ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT.

4. COMMENT: DESPITE POINTED DEMONSTRATIONS OF DISPLEASURE WITH ZAMBIA, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE GOZ WILL ALLOW ZAIRIAN-ZAMBIAN RELATIONS TO GROW MUCH COOLER. ZAIRE AND ZAMBIA SHARE TOO MANY VULNERABILITIES IN THEIR COPPER BELT REGIONS TO BECOME ACTIVE ENEMIES. MOREOVER, BOTH ARE ALREADY STRAPPED FINANCIALLY AND WEIGHED DOWN BY OTHER POLITICAL/MILITARY STRUGGLES, ZAMBIA IN RHODESIA AND ZAIRE WITH ANGOLA. END COMMENT.
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